



# Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

6 August 2025

9(2)(a) privacy

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## Official Information Request

**Our Ref: OIA 2025-0016**

I refer to your official information request received on 18 July 2025 for:

Pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following regarding the new Public Service code of conduct announced on 17 July 2025 (In The Press: [New code of conduct coming for public service | The Post](#)):

### Communication and Engagement

1. Copies of correspondence or advice (including but not limited to letters, emails, text messages, and WhatsApp messages) exchanged between the Public Service Commission and any Ministerial office regarding the new Public Service code of conduct.
2. Records of any consultation conducted with stakeholders, including but not limited to internal staff briefings, union engagement, public servants, or external feedback. Please include, all documents evidencing consultation with public servants, including workshops, engagement sessions, surveys, or pilot consultations.

### Documentation

3. Copies of all documents (including but not limited to briefs, proposals, cabinet papers, memos, or minutes) held by the Public Service Commission relating to the decision to develop or amend the Public Service code of conduct, including but not limited to:
  - Who initiated the amendments and why.
  - The stated objectives and rationale for introducing a new Public Service code of conduct.
  - A timeline for implementation of the new Public Service code of conduct.
4. Copies of all drafts, internal memos, emails, and minutes related to the development of the new Public Service code of conduct.
5. Details of the decision-making process to develop or amend the Public Service code of conduct, including which departments, officials, Ministers, committees, or external advisers were involved.

### Implementation and evaluation

6. Copies of any implementation plan(s), including rollout schedules, staff training, or monitoring mechanisms. Please include details of tools or metrics the Public Service Commission will use to monitor adherence to the code.

7. *Copies of all details relating to evaluation or review of the new Public Service code of conduct, including but not limited to dates and evaluation frameworks intended to assess the code's effectiveness after implementation.*

#### *Finances*

8. *Copies of all cost estimates or budget allocations associated with drafting, consulting on, or implementing the new Public Service code of conduct.*
9. *Copies of any financial documents with projected cost implications or savings from the implementation of the new Public Service code of conduct.*

*Please provide this information in an accessible, searchable format. If you refuse to release a document, I request the name of the document and the reason it was refused.*

*If any part of my request is unclear, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

#### **Overview Response to parts one to five**

Given the substantial volume of information captured by your request, we have prepared an overview of the work the Public Service Commission (the Commission) is undertaking to update the Standards of Integrity and Conduct (the Code). This approach allows us to provide you with timely and relevant information, outline the current status of the Commission's work, and help narrow the scope of material covered in parts one to five of your request.

After you have read the overview information, if you still wish to receive the information outlined in parts one to five of your request, please let us know more precisely what you are seeking. This will assist us in narrowing the volume of the information involved. If we do not hear back from you by 15 August 2025, we will consider our response to have met your request at this time.

The Public Service Commissioner (the Commissioner) is empowered to issue minimum standards of integrity and conduct (i.e. codes of conduct) in accordance with section 17 of the Public Service Act 2020 (the PS Act).

The current Code the [Standards of Integrity and Conduct](#), was issued in 2007 under the then State Services Act 1988, and continues to have effect under the PS Act. It contains minimum standards of integrity and conduct that must be complied with by relevant agencies and public servants.

The Commissioner commenced his tenure in November 2024 and made it a priority to update the Code. The primary reasons are to:

- reset expected standards of behaviour and strengthen professional practices, especially given the length of time it has been since the Code was last updated
- ensure consistency with the PS Act, including the public service principles and values
- support the Commissioner's function to promote integrity, accountability, and transparency by setting standards and issuing guidance.

In March 2025, following the Commissioner's direction the Commission began work to review and update the Code. The Code update is also a key action outlined in the Commission's Action Plan to Strengthen Integrity, 2025-2028: [Work we are doing to strengthen integrity and conduct - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#)

As at the time of your request, an updated Code is in development, but the project is in early stages and formal consultation has yet to take place with agencies. We have identified key aspects in the existing Code which remain relevant to the operating context of the Public Service. We have also identified areas of existing practise that could be better reflected in the updated Code and drafted

content accordingly. To improve user-friendliness, we have incorporated guidance within the Code, rather than as a standalone document.

The following table timelines key phases of the project:

Phase	Indicative Timeframe
Research and content development	March – July 2025
Pre-consultation testing of proposed content with key stakeholders	July 2025 (current)
Consultation period	Late August – October (six weeks)
Integrate consultation feedback	October – November 2025
Approval of updated code	December 2025
Commencement of updated Code	Early 2026

The Minister for the Public Service, Hon Judith Collins KC, has been informed that work to update the Code is underway and that it is a priority for the Commission. However, no formal advice has been provided or is required to be provided to the Minister for the Public Service seeking decisions on the Code. Similarly, there has been no need to engage with any other Ministerial office on this work

#### **Response to parts six, seven, eight and nine**

I am refusing parts six, seven, eight and nine of your requests under section 18(e) of the OIA on the grounds the requested information does not exist.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz](mailto:Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks

**Manager – Ministerial and Executive Services  
Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission**